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Item 10 of the provisional agenda
Selection of topics for seminars to take place during the 2018 CES plenary session

Summary of the consultation on topics for the seminars to be held during the 2019 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

In May 2018, UNECE carried out an electronic consultation with the members of the Conference of European Statisticians on the possible topics for the two seminars to be held during the 2019 plenary session of the Conference. Countries and organizations were invited to select topics for the seminars, indicate whether their office would be willing to be a member of an organizing committee of the seminar, or prepare a paper for the seminars, and also to propose additional topics for subsequent years.

A total of 46 countries and international organizations replied to the consultation. The present note provides a summary of the replies received. Based on the outcome, the Bureau will make a proposal to the Conference for a decision to be taken on 19 June 2018 under agenda item 10.

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I. Introduction

1. This year 46 countries and international organizations replied to the electronic consultation on topics to be discussed at the two seminars of the 2019 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES). The following countries and international organizations replied: Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Japan, Latvia, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-Stat), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD).

2. The Secretariat circulated a list of possible topics on 2 May 2018. The results of the consultation are presented in Section II. The countries and organizations that volunteered to be a member of an organizing committee of the seminar or to submit a paper are listed under each topic.

3. In addition to voting on the topics, several countries proposed new topics for future CES seminars, as follows:

(a) Trust. ethics and social licencing in data ecosystems and policies (Finland);

(b) Core economic statistics and the impacts of globalisation and digitalisation – the current developments regarding globalisation and digitalisation have a massive impact on core economic statistics. Especially the activities of multinational enterprise groups (MNEs) illustrate the challenges faced by official statistics in adequately covering cross-border phenomena and, consequently, ensuring in the long term the quality and information value of major economic indicators. Complex issues arising from that could be treated in a seminar on "Core economic statistics and the impacts of globalisation & digitalisation". Such issues include both the internal work organisation in NSIs (Large Cases Units) and ways of shaping international cooperation and related problems and opportunities such as issues of data protection in the context of international data exchange regarding MNEs. In addition, especially methodological issues are raised regarding the coverage of the effects of digitalisation, IT-supported data collection techniques and the inclusion of new multiple data sources. New opportunities for analysis and dissemination arising from these topics are also interesting in this context (Germany);

(c) Digital economy – the seminar would follow one of the three perspectives: (i) the current state of CES countries in measuring the digital economy; (ii) a focus on the impact of the digital economy on the financial industry and its possible disruption; and (iii) "fight digital with digital" – how the digitalization can help to modernize the statistical system (Canada);

(d) Data stewardship – the seminar would address the confusion of the terms "data governance" and "data stewardship", define both, and describe how each applies to the management of data as a strategic asset (Canada).

4. The new proposals are well appreciated. The CES Bureau will consider these topics to be included in the list for the CES seminars to be held in 2020.

II. Results of the survey conducted in May 2018: preferences

A. New data sources – accessibility and use

5. This topic received the highest number of votes: 38 votes (34 from countries and 4 from international organizations).

Contributions offered:

6. Switzerland, OECD and UNSD volunteered to be part of an organizing committee for the seminar.

7. Possible papers:

- Georgia
- Netherlands - a paper on the experience of the Center for Big Data Statistics established in September 2016 or other papers related to new data sources
- Norway
- Slovenia - a paper on the modernisation of price statistics
- Sweden (possibly)
- Switzerland
- UNCTAD - a paper on big data

Comments made:

8. Turkey underlined relevance of the topic in light of the growing importance of strategic issues for NSOs.

9. Switzerland offered to share their experience as a member of the Global Working Group on Big Data for Official Statistics and a recently developed strategy.

B. Meaningful engagement with policy makers – impartiality and relevance of NSOs

10. The topic received 25 votes (23 from countries and 2 from international organizations).

Contributions offered:

11. Canada, Serbia and UNSD volunteered to be part of an organizing committee for the seminar. Switzerland offered support to the organization.

12. Possible papers:

- Netherlands – several papers: (1) on Urban Data Centres (UDC), which are a joint project between Statistics Netherlands and city government aiming at broadening, deepening and enhancing municipal statistics by linking them to Statistics Netherlands data and contributing their expertise; (2) on professionalizing account management; (3) possibly on Statistics Netherlands Academy for internal and external customers, which starts the executive phase in September 2018 (to be confirmed)
- Poland - a paper "Official statistics for effective strategic management – Polish experiences"

Comments made:

- Turkey underlined relevance of the topic in light of the growing importance of strategic issues for NSOs.

C. Policy applications of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA)

13. The topic received 10 votes (8 from countries and 2 from international organizations).

Contributions offered:

14. Norway, Sweden and UNSD offered to be part of an organizing committee for the seminar.

15. Possible papers:

- Belarus - a paper from the point of view of a country that is just beginning to implement the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting.
- Lithuania
- Norway - papers on policy relevant implementations on both SEEA Central Framework and SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting
- Sweden

Comments made:

16. Norway highlighted relevance of the topic and offered contribution to this seminar also from the Ministry of Climate and Environment, either a keynote presentation or participation in a panel on the issue of policy relevance. Alternatively the Ministry would contribute a paper.

D. Challenges in measuring intergenerational relationships

17. The topic received 9 votes from countries. Russian Federation offered to be a seminar organizer and prepare a paper on this topic.

18. United Kingdom recommended to consider this topic for a seminar in 2020 or after, to take into account the progress made by the Titchfield City Group on Ageing-related Statistics and Age-disaggregated Data.

E. Can data save lives – official statistics for disaster risk reduction

19. The topic received 9 votes (7 from countries and 2 from international organizations). UNSD offered to contribute to the organization of the seminar. Finland (possibly) and Norway offered a paper on this topic.

III. Conclusions

20. The CES Bureau will discuss the results of the electronic consultation and will present a proposal to the Conference on the 2019 seminar topics. The Conference will decide about the topics on 19 June 2018 under agenda item 10.